



County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 713, Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 974-1101
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov>

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

December 10, 2009

The Honorable Antonio Villaraigosa
Mayor of the City of Los Angeles
200 North Spring Street, Room 303
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Board of Supervisors
GLORIA MOLINA
First District

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Second District

ZEV YAROSLAVSKY
Third District

DON KNABE
Fourth District

MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH
Fifth District

Dear Mayor Villaraigosa:

PLANS TO SEEK PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A SOLAR ENERGY PLANT AT PALMDALE REGIONAL AIRPORT

On November 18, 2009, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously asked this Office to transmit a letter to the members of the City of Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners, the Executive Director of the Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), and the Mayor's office regarding recently-announced plans by LAWA to hire a consultant to assist LAWA in finding a developer to construct a solar energy plant on vacant land owned by the City surrounding the Palmdale Regional Airport. Attached are the letters to LAWA and the Board of Airport Commissioners.

We would greatly appreciate your support and assistance in securing answers to the specific questions outlined in the attached correspondence. The County of Los Angeles is deeply committed to seeing LAWA pursue a regional commitment to air travel in the greater Los Angeles area. We are concerned that by investigating the solar energy plant option, LAWA and the City of Los Angeles are pursuing a strategy that may seriously impair efforts to promote regionalization of air travel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "WTF", followed by a stylized flourish.

WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

WTF:ES:MKZ:pg

Attachments (2)

c: Board of Supervisors, Los Angeles County
Acting County Counsel, Los Angeles County
Board of Airport Commissioners, LAWA
Gina Marie Lindsey, Executive Director, LAWA
Andrew Lazzaretto



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December 10, 2009

Gina Marie Lindsey
Executive Director
Los Angeles World Airports
1 World Way
Post Office Box 92216
Los Angeles, CA 90009-2216

Dear Ms. Lindsey:

PLANS TO SEEK PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A SOLAR ENERGY PLANT AT PALMDALE REGIONAL AIRPORT

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) recently announced plans to hire a consultant to assist LAWA in finding a developer to construct a solar energy plant on 17,500 acres of vacant land owned by the City of Los Angeles surrounding the Palmdale Regional Airport (Palmdale Airport). This announcement came as a surprise to the County of Los Angeles. In correspondence you sent to me dated January 14, 2009 regarding the future planned use of the City-owned property, you stated in part:

"Please know that when a proposal/timeline is produced [regarding transitional uses for portions of the City-owned property at Palmdale] we will be happy to inform the County of Los Angeles of such a plan."

To date the County has not received any details of the proposal nor a timeline for the project from LAWA or the City of Los Angeles. All the information received on this proposed project has come to the County via public media sources. Based on the media reports, the Board of Supervisors on November 18, 2009 unanimously asked this Office to transmit a letter to the members of the City of Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners, Mayor's office, and Executive Director of the Los Angeles World Airports inquiring as to the details of this proposal. Specifically, the Board of Supervisors requests that LAWA respond to the following questions:

1. Please provide details on the proposed solar energy plant. For example, where does LAWA envision this facility being built and how will it interface with the current airport?

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective And Caring Service"

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Fifth District

2. In your January 14, 2009 letter, you acknowledge that LAWA owns approximately 17,750 acres of land adjacent to Palmdale Airport. Published reports indicate that 17,500 of these acres are to be devoted to the solar energy plant. If the solar energy plant is approved and developed, how will the project impact future use as an airport of the City-owned land adjacent to the Palmdale Airport?
3. Since the 17,500 acres in question were acquired for the “eventual development of an airport facility that would serve the regional needs and address capacity issues at Los Angeles International Airport,” and a great deal of the 17,500 acres were acquired from more than 2,700 property owners through the use of eminent domain for airport purposes, how does LAWA reconcile diverting the use of this acreage to develop a solar energy plant? And what protections will LAWA offer to ensure that this property will ultimately be used for airport purposes?
4. The Board of Supervisors has made numerous attempts to ensure that LAWA pursues a regionalization strategy when it comes to air travel in the basin. In the recent past the Board has urged LAWA to:
 - Institute incentives to promote air traffic at Palmdale Airport;
 - Determine the suitability of using Ontario and Palmdale airports for new larger aircraft; and
 - Identify in detail the future use for the undeveloped property adjacent to the Palmdale Airport.

How is the proposed action taken by the Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners on November 16, 2009 to investigate turning the unused Palmdale Airport property into a solar energy plant consistent with LAWA's charge to pursue a regional approach to air travel?

5. One of the elements of the Settlement Agreement resolving the LAX Master Plan litigation, of which the County is a party, was a commitment by LAWA to pursue and implement a regional approach to air travel. How is this proposed action by LAWA and the Board of Air Commissioners consistent with the commitment in the Settlement Agreement to pursue regionalization? How can LAWA legitimately pursue the use of Palmdale Airport as part of a regional strategy if the land acquired and intended for airport use is converted to a solar energy plant? Does this action mean that LAWA is officially abandoning Palmdale Airport as part of any future attempt at regionalization?

6. The City of Palmdale and the County have been working together to identify potential interest on the part of airlines in providing flights in and out of Palmdale Airport once the LAWA lease expires. If LAWA moves forward with the solar initiative, it could have a chilling effect on the multi-jurisdictional efforts to provide air service to northern Los Angeles County and regional air service for the basin. Has LAWA taken into account that pursuing a solicitation process for a solar energy plant could be sending the wrong message to any airline with potential interest in serving Palmdale Airport?

To reiterate, the County of Los Angeles is deeply committed to seeing LAWA pursue a regional commitment to air travel in the greater Los Angeles area. The County is concerned that by investigating the solar energy plant option, LAWA and the City of Los Angeles are pursuing a strategy that may seriously impair efforts to promote regionalization of air travel.

Sincerely,



WILLIAM T FUJIOKA
Chief Executive Officer

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- c: Board of Supervisors, Los Angeles County
Antonio Villaraigosa, Mayor, City of Los Angeles
Acting County Counsel, Los Angeles County
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December 10, 2009

Board of Airport Commissioners
Los Angeles World Airports
1 World Way, Room 115-A
Los Angeles, CA 90045

Dear Board of Airport Commissioners:

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